300 crores were given to the State, but non-utilization led to wild protests so much so the hon. Prime Minister, Vajpayeeji, himself issued instructions for forthwith implementation of development works in the KBK region. But the mystery deepened when the Centre claimed to have released an amount of Rs. 1265 crores, but the State claimed not to have received the money at all. The much-publicised KBK plan, thus, died in cold storage, or is dying a natural death, while the people continue to suffer as before, without any ray of hope for a better future. I, therefore, appeal to the Union Government for immediate action.

Destruction and encroachment of reserve forests

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN (Kerala): Thank you very much, Sir. Through this special mention, I am seeking the immediate intervention of the Ministry of Environment and Forests in the matter of destruction and encroachment of forest land in Kerala.

Sir, A massive and large-scale encroachment and destruction of virgin forest has been taking place at Mathikettan Shola of Idduki district of Kerala. The organised land grabbing operation in the Mathikettan Forest area is learnt to have been carried out with a strong and powerful political backing and with the connivance of higher officials. There is a serious lapse in conserving the forest land, and they are balantly violating the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 and the Environmental Protection Act of 1986, which are the prime environment legislations in our country. Despite the fact that the matter is so serious, no effective and adequate steps are being taken to evict the illegal encroachers from the Mathikettan forest land. The Mathikettan Forest area is considered as a deemed reserve forest, and, hence, it has to be conserved as per the laws. But it is learnt that titles have been issued to those persons who encroached on the forest land.

Hence, it is urged that a special Central team of the Ministry of Environment and Forests be deputed to the Mathikettan area to take stock of the situation and to initiate appropriate action in the matter, at the earliest.

Sir, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Shri O. Rajagopal, is here, I would like to have a response from the Government in this regard.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): Sir, this matter is already known to the Government. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has already expressed its concern to the State Government of Kerala, and have requested them to take immediate and stringent action and report. It has already been mentioned that the Supreme Court is monitoring the whole issue. It is a very serious issue.

Adverse effects of depiction of violence on Television

DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY (Nominated): Sir, I seek your permission to bring to the notice of this House the growing trend of media violence, with particular reference to its adverse effect on children. Newspapers widely cover sensational crimes. Directors of films prefer to make thriller and horror movies. Television channels show violence in many of their programmes. A family with cable connection has access to about one hundred television channels. Under the provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, permission for cable television operation is given simply through registration, and no licence is required. With the changing trends of globalisation, access to foreign-based channels has become extensive. It is agreed the world over that television violence immediately affects the child's behaviour, or, it may manifest some years later. While I am a protagonist of the freedom of speech and artistic presentation of social facts, I oppose the mode of presentation, or, depiction of violence on television. The Centre for Advocacy and Research, with the support of UNESCO and UNICEF, conducted a study in cities like: Delhi, Lucknow, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad. It has revealed growing prevalence of violence in television serials. It further disclosed that children are losing their childhood in the process. They are living and thinking beyond their years, involving many risks. Many countries have initiated effective measures to counter it. In America, a National Television Violence Study was conducted in collaboration with Universities, Researchers, Media Executives, Mental Health Experts and others. I request the hon. Minister for Information and Broadcasting to immediately conduct a broad-based study and suggest some remedies for it.

SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member.